

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 /116 W

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R 011526Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9064

INFO AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

COMUSFORAZ

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PO

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESS COMMENT ON LAJES BASE ISSUES

REF: LISBON 219, LISBON 400

SUMMARY: PRESS HAS CONTINUED TO GIVE HEAVY PLAY TO QUESTION OF FUTURE OF LAJES BASE. ONE PAPER ASKS IF SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT IS EVEN POSSIBLE; ALL PAPERS HIGHLIGHT COMMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER PATRICIO TO EFFECT THAT GOP MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF PUBLIC OPINION OPPOSED TO CONTINUED US PRESENCE IN AZORES. END SUMMARY

1. MODERATE LISBON DAILY O SEculo, IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL JANUARY 31, MENTIONED FONMIN PATRICIO'S OCTOBER 5 PRESS CONFERENCE (LISBON 3705) IN WHICH FONMIN SAID GOP HOPED US WOULD NOT RENEW AZORES AGREEMENT. EDITORIAL MADE NOW FAMILIAR PITCH THAT PORTUGAL SUFFERING OIL BOYCOTT BECAUSE OF USG USE OF LAJES IN ISRAEL RESUPPLY. ARTICLE STATES, "THE RIGHT TO USE A BASE LOCATED ON PORTUGUESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERRITORY SHOULD CORRESPOND NOT TO A PRICE--BUT TO A

COMBINATION OF CONDITIONS AND GUARANTEES WHICH WILL PROTECT THE RECIPROCITY OF INTERESTS, AND DIRECTLY COMPENSATE THE CITIZENS AFFECTED BY THE EXISTENCE OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OF SUCH GREAT STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE AS LAJES." CONCLUDING, EDITORIAL WEIGHS COMPLEXITIES OF THE QUESTION "IN VIEW OF TELEGRAMS AND DECLARATIONS RECENTLY MADE PUBLIC" AND ASKS THE QUESTION "IN THE LIGHT OF THE LAJES BASE AND THE US DESIRE TO EXTEND ITS TENURE AT THE FACILITIES WHICH IT HAS USED FOR THREE DECADES--WHAT SORT OF AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE?"

2. MORNING PRESS FEBRUARY 1 HIGHLIGHTS REMARKS OF FONMIN PATRICIO IN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO OBSCURE FRENCH WEEKLY, VALEURS ACTUELLES, WITH REGARD TO LAJES BASE. PATRICIO TOLD JOURNALIST THAT USE OF LAJES SHORTENED WORLD WAR II AND WAS DECISIVE IN THE DEFENSE OF BERLIN IN 1949. PATRICIO STATED THAT "THERE IS A STRONG CURRENT OF PORTUGUESE PUBLIC OPINION WHICH IS HOSTILE TO THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH A BASE AND OUR GOVERNMENT CANNOT FORGET, IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS, THE WEIGHT OF THAT CURRENT OF OPINION." (COMMENT: THERE IS INDEED SUCH A CURRENT OF OPINION, PRINCIPALLY AMONG PERSONS OF THE LEFT WHOSE OPINIONS ARE NOT GENERALLY SEEN TO WEIGH HEAVILY IN THE GOP'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. END COMMENT.)

3. LIBERAL WEEKLY EXPRESSO OF JANUARY 26 CARRIES FRONT PAGE STORY ON AZORES BASE UNDER HEADLINE "AMERICAN AIR FORCE EXPANDING FACILITIES AT LAJES." ARTICLE STATES THAT WHILE GOP-USG NEGOTIATIONS ON FUTURE OF LAJES BASE ARE PROCEEDING IN WASHINGTON, AND WHILE "SWELLING CHORUS OF SEMI-OFFICIAL VOICES" IN LISBON ARE DEMANDING REAL ADVANTAGES FOR PORTUGAL IN EXCHANGE FOR US USE OF LAJES, USAF IS EXPANDING HOUSING FACILITIES AT BASE. WEEKLY VIDA MUNDIAL CARRIES SIMILAR ARTICLE. COMUSFORAZ REPORTS THESE STORIES ARE INACCURATE. ARTICLE NOTES THAT, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT, USAF AND NOT US NAVY "WILL CONTINUE TO USE THE BASE." REVERSAL OF DECISION CREDITED TO RECENT SHOWING OF USAF INTEREST IN LAJES "AND NOT MERELY, AS USED TO BE INSISTED, FOR ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE...."

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4. RELATED REPORT ON SPEECH ON LAJES IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY AZOREAN DEPUTY AND ON AZOREAN EDITORIAL COMMENT ON LAJES COVERED SEPTTEL. SCOTT

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